

spending for education over the next 7 years, you will find that we proposed an increase over those 7 years of \$24 billion in additional education spending.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is not just how much money that we throw at these problems, because we have increased the expenditures in almost every educational field over the past decade by tremendous sums of money. Then we get these headlines on our magazines, *Dumb and Dumber*. We find the results, the SAT scores have dropped, total average of, from 1972, a score of 937 to 902 in 1994. We find our 17-year-olds scored 17 points worse in science than in 1970. We find reading also at proficient levels, the scores have fallen since 1992. In math, U.S. students scored worse in math than all other large countries except for Spain. Thirty percent of college freshmen must take remedial education courses. This is nationwide. And my community college, the president of our local community college said it is up to 70 percent of his entering freshmen need remedial education. So we must look at how we are spending these tremendous sums of dollars and the amounts.

That is part of what this debate is about here, whether it is education or whether it is environment.

Let me give you two more examples. Here is an article, I brought this to the House before but it is absolutely astounding. It talks about job training programs and education programs, job education programs in the state of Florida.

This is just out in the last month, a State study. Florida, in Florida, State, local and Federal expenditures for these training programs were \$1 billion. Listen to this: Most students who entered the program never graduated. In all, 37 percent of 347 training and vocational programs performed poorly according to this report and only 20 percent of those enrolled in high school vocational programs completed that. The report found, and listen to this, of that figure only 19 percent found a full-time job after graduating and then were employed in just above a minimum wage, at a minimum wage level and out of that position in less than six months.

The examples go on and on. Here is another story that was in the *Washington Post*. Department of Labor spent about \$305,000 for each participant in a job program in Puerto Rico. The problem is, we are paying more and we are getting less. Part of it deals with the Department of Education, which now has 4,786 employees, of which 3,322 are in Washington, D.C., just a few blocks from here.

So part of this argument is paying more, getting less. Part of it is command and control in Washington. Part of it is giving these 3,322 bureaucrats down the street in the Federal Department of Education something to do. They do that. It is time that we brought that to a halt.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF VICTIMS RIGHTS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay a special tribute and certainly with a great deal of remorse to the victims of crime throughout America. We honor this week Victims Rights Week, and we pay tribute to all of the men and women and children in this country whose lives have been cut short by hideous acts of violence.

In particular, I must cite several heinous crimes in my community: the vicious murders of Jennifer Ertman, Elizabeth Pena and Monique Miller of Houston, TX. Jennifer Ertman, 14, and Elizabeth Pena, 16, left a party and were taking a shortcut home near a park on June 24, 1993, when they crossed paths with 6 youths engaged in a drunken gang initiation rite. The two girls were repeatedly raped before being strangled and stomped to death by a mob.

Monique Miller was murdered and sexually abused by a repeat offender.

These teenagers and this very young child will never live out their dreams and live up to the great potential that each of them possessed. Their families will never see them achieve all that they should have. They will never attend a school dance again, go to college, get married or have their own families. Their dreams and the dreams that their parents had for them have been destroyed by senseless violence.

There is growing recognition in this country that most sex offense victims are children and that reporting of these offenses is still low. The FBI law enforcement bulletin reported that only 1 to 10 percent of child molestation cases are ever reported to police, and a National Victim Center survey estimated that 61 percent of rape victims are less than 18 years of age; 29 percent are less than 11 years of age.

A recent United States Department of Justice study of 11 jurisdictions and the District of Columbia reported that 10,000 women under the age of 18 were raped in 1992 in these jurisdictions. At least 3,800 were children under the age of 12.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the FBI, children under the age of 18 accounted for 11 percent of all murder victims in the United States in 1994. Between 1976 and 1994, an estimated 37,000 children were murdered. And half of all murders in 1994 were committed with a handgun; about 7 in 10 victims age 15 to 17 were killed with a handgun.

Clearly, we must do more to protect our children from violence. This requires more than jailing sex offenders and violent criminals after they commit crimes, although swift and effective punishment is important. This requires strong prevention and education which will keep our children from becoming victims of violent crime.

Tomorrow the House Committee on the Judiciary, of which I am a member, will mark up H.R. 2137, also known as Megan's Law, in honor of 7-year old Megan Kanka who was raped, strangled and murdered by a twice-convicted pedophile who lived across the street from her. I will be a cosponsor of this legislation.

This bill would amend the 1994 crime bill to require States to release relevant information regarding persons convicted of molesting or kidnapping children and certain other sex crimes, when it is necessary to protect the public. This bill would guarantee the appropriate dissemination of information so that parents, school officials and community groups can responsibly use the information in order to protect their children.

Today I pay tribute to these teenagers, Jennifer and Elizabeth and children like Monique and Megan, and I ask during Victims Rights Week we take time to recognize the victims of violent crime and work together to prevent senseless violence in our communities. Let us stand up against the repeal of the assault weapons ban. Let us recognize that the Brady bill must be reinforced to prevent reckless utilization of handguns. Let us understand that we must stop the siege of our children by pedophiles who recklessly go from State to State and perpetrate their violent acts on our innocent children.

Let us bring back innocence to America again so that men and women and children can be safe in their homes. Let us stand up for the victims of America.

We owe it to Jennifer, Elizabeth, Monique and Megan and all of the others whose lives have been snuffed out as a result of violent crimes. We owe it to the victims of Oklahoma City, and we owe it to ourselves. We owe it to America. Let us stand up against crime and let us stand for victims.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. COX] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COX of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues some words that come from a 67-year-old woman who works at the minimum wage in Santa Ana, CA:

Dear Congressman—she wrote me recently—I strongly advise you not to raise the minimum wage. In my working career, I have had a lot of under, slightly over and straight minimum wage jobs. As a single parent, I managed to raise my son without any handout from the government. Although raising the minimum wage may should like a great humanitarian idea, it really isn't.

In the past every time minimum wages were raised, the entire national work force, plus welfare recipients, also demanded and received raises. The cost of goods and services rose to meet the higher cost of labor, and you forced me to work a lot of overtime to maintain the same buying power I had before my "generous" raise.

I am now 67 years old and consider myself extremely lucky to have an employer willing to hire elderly people like myself. My employer is a small businessman. Recently because of the economy he was forced to raise his prices and cut his overhead just to stay in business. I took a Small Business Administration class in college, and I know that he has to match my Social Security payments, pay higher State disability and workers compensation. He and others like him will have no alternative but to close their doors and I will be unemployed.

When I lose my job, because my employer can no longer afford to stay in business, what is the government going to do about me, someone who is willing to work? How is the government going to help support me? Who is going to pay for this?

Very truly yours, Joanna B. Menser, Santa Ana, CA.

That is a personal story, but how about the big picture? How about macroeconomics, and how about the views of such institutional stalwarts of the liberal point of view as the New York Times? Some time ago the New York Times ran an editorial on the minimum wage. The headline was, the right minimum wage, zero. By that the New York Times did not mean that people should actually work for nothing. Rather, what they meant is that wages, the cost and the price of labor should be determined in a free market and in fact no one should be held to a so-called minimum wage but, rather, everyone should have the opportunity to make an increasing wage in return for higher skills and higher productivity.

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Let me read from that editorial in the New York Times which was titled, "The Right Minimum Wage: \$0.00."

"Anyone working in America," the New York Times says, "surely deserves a better living standard than can be managed on the minimum wage."

I think we can all agree with that.

But there is a virtual consensus among economists that the minimum wage is an idea whose time has passed. Raising the minimum wage by a substantial amount would price poor working people out of the job market, people like Joanna Menser, whose remarks we just heard.

"An increase in the minimum wage," the New York Times wrote in their editorial, "would increase unemployment."

Let me repeat this line from the New York Times editorial: "An increase in the minimum wage would increase unemployment, raise the legal minimum price of labor above the productivity of the least skilled worker, and fewer will be hired."

"If a higher minimum wage means fewer jobs, why does it remain on the agenda of some liberals," the New York Times asked.

"Those at greatest risk from a higher minimum wage would be young poor workers who already face formidable barriers to getting and keeping jobs."

They conclude their editorial in the New York Times as follows:

"The idea of using a minimum wage to overcome poverty is old, honorable, and fundamentally flawed."

This is the New York Times now. This is not Congressman CHRIS COX from California.

"The idea of using a minimum wage to overcome poverty is old, honorable, and fundamentally flawed. It's time to put this hoary debate behind us and find a better way to improve the lives of people who work very hard for very little."

Finally, the New York Times of Friday, April 19, just last Friday, is worth noticing here on the floor in this debate among our colleagues. Three factoids from the New York Times, Friday April 19, 1996, I commend to all of my colleagues:

Number of times in 1993 and 1994, when Democrats controlled Congress, that President Clinton mentioned in public his advocacy of a minimum wage increase: zero. Number of times he has done so in 1995 and 1996, when Republicans have controlled Congress, 47. Number of congressional hearings Democrats held on the minimum wage in 1993 and 1994: zero.

NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS AND OTHER ECONOMISTS SUPPORT INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that 20 of our Republican colleagues in the House now support an increase in the minimum wage.

They join 3 recipients of the Nobel Prize in Economics, 7 past presidents of the American Economics Association and more than 100 distinguished economists nationwide who have signed a "Statement of Support for a Minimum Wage Increase."

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the issue is compelling.

Those economists recognize that profits are soaring, wages for workers are declining, and consumer demand is stagnant.

That is a prescription for economic trouble.

Middle and moderate-income Americans now feel the squeeze between profits and wages as much as the low income and the unemployed.

Almost half of the money in America is in the hands of just 20 percent of the people.

That top 20 percent is made up of families with the highest incomes. The bottom 20 percent has less than 5 percent of the money in their hands.

A modest increase in the minimum wage could help the bottom 20 percent, and, it will not hurt the top 20 percent.

The President has proposed such a modest increase in the minimum wage—an increase of 90 cents, over 2 years.

Such an increase would mean an additional \$1,800 a year for the working poor.

That amount of money makes a big difference in the ability of families to

buy food and shelter, to pay for energy to heat their homes, and to be able to clothe, care for and educate their children.

That amount of money makes the difference between families with abundance and families in poverty.

An increase in the minimum wage won't provide abundance, but it can raise working families out of poverty.

As indicated, while the cost of bread, milk, eggs, a place to sleep, heat, clothing to wear, a bus ride and a visit to the doctor has been going up, the income of low, moderate and middle-income people has been going down.

Between 1980 and 1992, income for the top 20 percent increased by 16 percent. During that same period, income for the bottom 20 percent declined by 7 percent.

For the first 10 of those 12 years, between 1980 and 1990, there were no votes to increase the minimum wage.

Without an increase in the minimum wage, those with little money end up with less money. That is because the cost of living continues to rise.

By 1993, families in the top 20 percent had an average income of \$104,616.

In contrast, families in the bottom 20 percent in America had an average income of just \$12,964.

That is an astounding gap of more than \$90,000!

The bottom 20 percent of our citizens can have a full-time employee in the family, working at least 40 hours a week, and still not able to make ends meet.

In fact, the earnings of that family could place them below the poverty line.

Recent studies indicate that job growth in America is lowest where the income gap is widest.

Closing the gap helps create jobs rather than reduce jobs.

Those who argue that an increase in the minimum wage will cause job losses, fail to look at all the facts.

Other recent studies have shown that an increase in the minimum wage tends to cause an increase in jobs, rather than a loss of jobs. What are we waiting for, Mr. Speaker:

The Statement of the Nobel Prize winners, the past presidents of the American Economics Association and the more than 100 economic scholars across America makes the following point: "After adjusting for inflation, the value of the minimum wage is at its second lowest annual level since 1955."

Let us bring minimum wages into the modern age. Let us support H.R. 940, a bill that will help create a livable wage for millions of workers by permitting a modest increase in the minimum wage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HUNTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]